

N^o. 24

A
SPIRITUAL WARNING
FOR
Times of WAR :

CONTAINING
A Description and Prognostick of War.

WITH
Christian ADVICE what is to be done
when God either Threatens, or Inflicts that
DREADFUL JUDGMENT.

In a Sermon Preached upon Jerem. X. v. 22, 23, 24, 25.

By the Author of *The Method of Good Preaching.*

Done out of French.

Augustine, *de Civit. Dei*, l. I. c. I. circ. fin.

It has been the method of Divine Providence, to correct and chastise the corrupt Lives of Men, by Wars; and also, by such Afflictions, to exercise the righteous and commendable Lives of others; and, after they have been tryed, either to translate them to a better Life above, or to continue them here below, for some farther good services.

L O N D O N :

Printed by J. Brudenell, for John Lawrence, at the Angel
in the Poultry. And sold by A. Baldwin, near the
Oxford-Arms in Warwick-Lane; 1701.

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wicked by the sword, and also by such afflictions, as are
in the right hand of God, and which are not of man's
power, either to remove, or to prevent, or to
avoid them by any means.

L O N D O N :

Printed by J. Bowdell, for John Lawrence, at the Angel
in the Post-Office. And sold by A. Malpas, near the
Oxford-Door in Warwick-Lane; 1701.

The Dedication

To my Dear and Well-beloved Daughter,

Mrs. Elizabeth Van Heythuysen.

My Dearest Daughter,

EVER since the Lord was pleas'd to bestow you upon me, my Paternal Affection hath constantly watched for, and most chearfully embraced all opportunities of doing you good. A most tender Love towards you, began, grew up with, and when you were disposed of in Marriage, 'twas doubled like your self. Ever since it hath been encreasing and multiplying, with that lovely Offspring which our good and bountiful God hath given you. But, as there is nothing which I long for so much as your Souls, so above all things, it fills my heart with the sweetest Transports of Joy, to find an holy Work of God conspicuous and thriving in you, and behold such buddings of his Grace (as

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through

The Dedication.

through the tenderness of their Age can be expected) in those endearing Plants, my Grandchildren. When it pleased the Lord to take one of them from us, the wound to Nature was deep and sharp; but I can truly say, the hopes I had of its translation to a far better place, was heavenly and healing Balm. This World may well be call'd a Vale of Tears, where Exercises and Afflictions are connected, as if the removal of one were to make room for another; and private Troubles are swallow'd up in publick Dangers. You know how severely God hath corrected our Protestant Brethren in France, and elsewhere; he hath given them water of Gall to drink. The Nations also, by warlike Concussions, have been put into a bloody Sweat; and the Clouds are returning after the Rain; a blacker Tempest of desolating War, gathers and thickens over this part of the World. Can we, whose sins and provocations have been, and still continue to be so great, flatter our selves with Dreams of perpetual Tranquility? The wise Man foreseeth the Evil and bideth himself, but the Fool goeth on and is punished. My great Concern for you and my self is, that we may understand what course to take
for

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for allaying our present Fears, or preventing, if possible (or if that cannot be done) preparing our selves to bear (when they come) impendent Judgments. I think, more plain, more rational, and scriptural Advice, cannot be desired, than is contained in the following Discourse, which I present unto you. It contains the substance of a Sermon preached by your Reverend and Pious Grandfather, August 2. 1626, upon a day of solemn Humiliation appointed by King Charles I. I shew'd the Original, written in French by my dear Father's own Hand, to several French Ministers; who judged it as proper for this Time, as ever it was for that wherein deliver'd, and advised me, by all means, to let it see the light. I have done it into English for more publick Service; and here Dedicate it to your Self, with your dear and honoured Consort, as such a word in season which Solomon compares to Apples of Gold in pictures of Silver. My wishes and prayers are for your Happiness in all respects; and I hope the Lord will be with you in your present Circumstances, and shortly make you the joyful Mother of another Child thereby (which is the Glory of Christian Parents, by their Off-spring)

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Off-spring) to increase the Kingdom of Christ. As my chief concern is for the Souls of your self, and all yours; so 'tis my most serious Advice, and earnest Entreaty, that you would lay out your selves to the utmost, and use your authority over Children and Servants for God. Remember, and often ponder that noble Character which God gives Abraham, Gen. 18. 19. I know him, that he will command his children, and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment; that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him. As 'tis our honour to be call'd (tho not the natural, but, which is far better) the spiritual Children of Abraham, let us not flatter our selves, in saying, we have Abraham to our Father, unless we walk in the footsteps of our father Abraham's faith, Rom. 4. 12. Then, as 'tis said of him, Heb. 6. 13, 14. When God made a promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he sware by himself, saying, surely, Blessing, I will Bless thee, &c. So also we, as it follows, v. 17, 18. with the rest of the heirs of promise; By two immutable things, in which it is impossible for God to lye, may have

The Dedication.

have strong consolation when we flie for refuge, to lay hold on the hope set before us, &c.

Great is the rage, deep the designs, deadly the conspiracies of Antichristian Enemies against the Church of Christ at this day. Let us not fear them, so much as their Sins, any sordid compliance with them in Doctrin, Worship, or Manners, so long as we keep close to our God, in a way of Faith and Holiness; amidst all the Terrors and Confusions of War, The LORD will be the shield of our help, and the sword of our excellency. Then we may be sure, that God will let out no more of our Enemies fiery Indignation against us, than he himself sees fit, and will sanctifie, to exercise and refine our Graces; and thereby also they will the sooner become ripe, and kindle the consuming Flames of Divine Wrath against themselves.

I am,

Dear Son and Daughter,

Your entirely Loving and

most Affectionate Father,

John Delme.

ERRATA.

PAge 22. line 7, read *Bruit*. p. 23, l. 22, r. *Bruit*.
p. 24, l. 26, r. *Bruit*. p. 32, l. 29, r. *Scituate*.
p. 38, l. 1, r. *startled*.

Dear Son and Daughter,
Your entirely Loving and
most Affectionate Father,
John Deane.

A
 Spiritual W A R N I N G
 F O R
Times of War.

J E R. X. 22, 23, 24, 25.

Behold the noise of the Bruit is come, and a great commotion out of the North-Country, to make the Cities of Judah desolate, and a Den of Dragons. O Lord, I know that the way of a Man is not in himself: It is not in Man that walketh to direct his Steps. O Lord, correct me, but with Judgment, not in thine Anger, lest thou bring me to nothing. Pour out thy fury upon the Heathen that know thee not, and upon the Families that call not on thy Name; for they have eaten up Jacob, and devoured him, and consumed him, and made his Habitation desolate.

THE Wise Man tells us, Prov. X. 18. *That the Name of the Lord is a strong Tower, to which the Righteous run and are safe.* This is verified in all Dangers, and Evils, both Ordinary, and Extraordinary, whether Famine, Pestilence, or War; for Believers in such Dangers, breaking off their Sins by
 B Repentance;

Repentance ; and with Faith in the Mediator, calling upon the Name of the Lord, find it a strong Tower, in which they are always safe ; especially when those Graces are advanc'd to a more lively Exercise on a solemn Day of Fasting and Prayer ; for as the Body, when not over-charged with Food is more lively, and fit for Action ; so the Soul that sanctifies a Religious Fast, is more expeditious in its recourse to God for safety. Hereof we have had Experience in times of Pestilence, and Famine, whereby we should be encouraged to use the like Method in times of threatning War. We are not only taught by Scripture, and other Histories, but see it to be the common Custom of all Countries, where War rages, that Persons fly to their strong Holds for safety, how much more ought we amidst all the Dangers that surround and threaten us, to fly to the Name of the Lord, the most Great and Glorious of all Towers for our repose and safety ? And the rather, because frequent Experience shews how many ways all other Forts may be Destroyed ; by Undermining, Battering, or Bombarding , whereby the Persons seeking shelter in them , are many times rather destroyed than saved : But the Name of the Lord, rightly sought and trusted in, is that strong Tower which insults both Fraud and Violence, and remains unshaken by all the Efforts of the *World*, of *Antichrist*, or *Hell* it self. Let us then on this solemn Fasting Day, by humble fervent Prayer fly to this strong Tower, and as he that runs a Race, willingly abstains from Food, and laies aside unnecessary Rayment : So
it

it becomes us conscientiously to use Abstinence, and lay aside superfluous Dreffes on such a Day, whereon we are to run to our strong Tower for shelter from a threatening War. To this we are not only call'd by the Divine Providence; but his Majesty, as a Royal Watch-Man from his high Seat, commands us to implore the Divine Direction and Assistance for himself and his Allies.

In order hereunto, it is requisite we should consider the *Calamities* that incite us to, and the *Directions* that instruct us in this Duty; both which are comprehended in the Words of the Text, which we purpose briefly to *Explain*, and then more largely to *Apply*.

In these Verses then we have, 1. The *Description* of a great Calamity impending, v. 22. 2. A *Direction* how we ought to behave our selves in such Circumstances in the three following Verses.

First, The Prophet foretells the *Jews* of a great War that was ready to fall upon, and overwhelm them. Rightly to understand this Matter, we must consider, 1. That the People of the *Jews* had greatly Sinned and backslidden in matters of Faith, Worship and Manners; for which God had not only *reproved* them by divers *Prophets*, but *Chastened* them by divers *Judgments*. 2. That not being Reformed by all these, he threatens them with a total Destruction, by the Invasions of such Enemies as would overthrow them and their Estate intirely. This is the Summ of many Sermons Preached by this Prophet; and particularly the Subject insisted on from v. 17. of this

Chap. to the first verse of our Text, which contains a more particular Confirmation of what he had denounced against them. For, 3. The People for the most part were Incredulous and Obstinate, flattering themselves, and being deceived by false Prophets, they thought the *Evil* would *not come*, or at least, *pass over them* as former Calamities had done, and God would deliver them as he was wont. But lo! the Prophet wrests from them this vain Confidence, by telling them, 1. *The most certain coming of a potent and cruel Enemy.* 2. *The deplorable effect of his coming*: Wherewith the more to affect them, he represents him as at the Door, Saying, *Behold the noise of the Bruit is come, and a great commotion out of the North-Country, to make the Cities of Judah desolate, and a Den of Dragons,* q. d. 'You will not believe me, nor the
' other faithful Prophets of God, but rather your own
' vain and foolish Confidences, and the lying Suggestions
' of those that flatter *themselves*, and *you*, in a course
' of all Impiety; but 'tis certain, whether you believe
' it or no, that a full Judgment is at hand, an intire
' Consumption is determin'd of the Lord; for behold
' the Enemy is come; the *Tydings* are not only come,
' but the *Adversaries* themselves bring them, and their
' Voice is heard, and that to Destroy, not only all the
' Inhabitants, but also all their Dwellings. This we shall
understand more particularly, if we observe how *the coming of the Enemy* is described, and for *what end*.

As for *his coming*, it is delineated, 1. By the particle of Attention, *Behold*. 2. By the Hearing, or *the noise of the Bruit*. 3. His powerful Entrance, by
fallying

fallying forth of the Enemy, and a great commotion.
 4. The place from whence he came, *from the North-Country*. By all these he gives us to understand, not only *who* the Enemy was, but *how certainly and powerfully* he came against them.

The Enemy coming from the *North-Country*, denotes that it was the *King of Babylon*, with his *Chaldeans*, who dwelt North of *Judea*. Thus he is often described in this Prophecy, *Jer* 1. 13. The Lord shews the Prophet a *Seething pot, the face whereof was towards the North*. *V. 14, 15, 16*. And thus Interprets it. *Lo, I will call all the Families of the Kingdoms of the North, saith the Lord, and they shall come, and they shall set every one his Throne at the entring of the Gates of Jerusalem, &c.* And he not only discovers *who* the *Enemy* should be, but informs them that he should be *most mischievous and cruel*, as he had described him in the foregoing Chapter; and farther describes him in the following Verse, in that he should come from the North; for the fiercest and strongest Winds came from the North, *Jer*. IV. 11, 12, 13. He is call'd a dry *Wind from the high places in the Wilderness, not to fan or cleanse, but a full Wind, (i. e.) to blast*. He should come up as *Clouds*, his *Chariots* should be as a *whirl Wind*; his *Horses* swifter than *Eagles*, &c. *Jer*. V. 15, 16, 17. *Amighty Nation, whose Language thou knowest not; their quiver is an open Sepulcher. They shall eat up thy Harvest and thy Bread, thy Flocks, thine Herds, thy Vines, thy Fig-Trees. They shall impoverish thy fenced Cities, wherein thou trustedst, with the Sword.* More particularly Chap. VI.

v 23. They are called a *People from the North Country*, and represented to be most terrible, &c. Chap. XXV. 9. God threatens to bring *all the Families of the North under Nebuchadnezzar King of Babylon that should utterly destroy the Land, make it an astonishment, hissing, and a perpetual desolation.*

To represent this dismal and amazing Matter more to the Life, he says, *Behold*, lift up your eyes and you cannot but see it. Again, *The noise of the Bruit*, according to the Original, *The Voice of the hearing*, brought by the Enemy himself, against which you shall not be able to stop your Ears, as you have done to the Word of the Lord. Chap. IV. 15, 16. He describes his *Entrance at Dan*; the terror whereof made the Prophet cry out v. 19. *My bowels, my bowels, I am pained at the Heart, &c.* And Chap. VIII. 16. *The snorting of his Horses is heard from Dan, and makes the whole Land to tremble, &c.*

The coming of the Enemy is not only certain, but the end of his coming is to destroy, therefore he calls it a great *Commotion*; and says, Chap. VI. v. 3. *He comes like a Shepherd with his Flocks to feed.* And Chap. IV. v. 7. *Breaking out of his thicket. The destroyer of the Gentiles is on his way: He is gone forth from his place to make thy Land desolate, and thy Cities shall be laid waste without an Inhabitant.*

The horror of this *Destruction* is held forth in the words of making the *Land Desolate, and a Den of Dragons*, q. d. 'The Inhabitants should not only be *Destroyed*, but their *Places* possessed by wild Beasts 'and Dragons. Serpents that used to breed in the
Rubbish

Rubbish of demolished Walls and Houses. Their total Ruine is declared particularly. 1. *All their Inhabitants should be slain or led captive.* 2. *Not smaller Villages and weaker Towns alone, but the largest and strongest Cities turn'd to Desarts.* 3. *That not only Men, but useful Beasts should perish, and none remain but hurtful Ones and Dragons.* By such Expressions the Prophets use, to describe the utter Ruine and Destruction of Cities and Nations, as *Jer. XLIX. 33. And LI. 37. And Isa. XXXIV.* Thus we have had the terrible Description of the Babylonish Invasion, because they would not listen to the kinder Voice of the Lord by his Prophets, calling them to Repentance, they are forced to hear the dreadful noise of their fatal Enemies. *Behold, saith the Prophet, The noise of the Bruit is come, and a great commotion from the North-Country, to make the Cities of Judah desolate, and a Den of Dragons.*

To make all this more profitable by a suitable Application to the present Times. We may here, as in a Map, behold the sad and dismal Effects of War; and as by an Almanack learn when to expect them.

As for the *First*, tho' no Tongue nor Pen can fully describe the Miseries of War, yet something we hence learn for our Instruction; as *First the noise of the Bruit*, the very rumor fills the Soul with Horror, the Body with Trembling. As the Prophet speaks, *Jer. VI. 24. We have heard the fame thereof, our hands wax feeble, Anguish hath taken hold of us, and Pain as of a Woman in Travail.* This is doubled by a Report, not only of the Enemy as coming, but already come.

Agajaz,

Again, The Prophet describes it further, Jer. VI. 25. And X. 17. And VIII. 14. and IV. 6. He bids them keep out of the Field, and the high Way, lest they fall on the Enemies Sword. He represents Confusion, and Cries of Persons of all sorts flying away. He bids them gather up their Wares and retire into the defended Cities. He declares the first Fury of Enemies giving no Quarter, but cutting all in pieces, carrying Destruction with them after the frightened flying Prey, destroying fruitful Fields, pleasant Gardens, Ransacking and Burning pleasant Houses. And Chap. IV. 13. The Enemy is represented Coming up as Clouds, and Thundering and Lightning down a Tempest of Terror and Destruction every where. His Chariots like a Whirlwind, which breaks down Trees, and overturns Mountains. His Horses swifter than Eagles, which, as King of Birds, fly fastest to the Prey.

These may be call'd the beginning of Sorrows, if compared with what follows in the Besieging and taking of Cities. As the Prophet threatens, Jer. IV. 17. As keepers of a Field they are against thee round about, &c. This is attended with a thousand Evils. If the City be taken by assault, then is fulfilled that Word of the Prophet, Jer. IX. 21. Death is come up into our Windows, and entr'd into our Palaces, to cut off the Children from without, and the young Men from the Streets. And Jer. VI. 11. The fury of the Lord is pour'd out upon the Children abroad, and the Assembly of young Men together. Yea, who can declare the Violence, Rage, and Insolency of proud Conquerors in Plundering, Killing, and leading Captive?

If

If the City bravely *stand out for a while*, That Defence is attended with the Fatigue of constant Watchings, the hazard of *standing in* Breaches, the hard labour of *repairing* them, the Smart of Wounds, Pinching Famine, and Raging Diseases (even the Pestilence it self) that ordinarily attend it; and after all, when the City *is taken*, the foregoing Miseries of the Siege, are followed and encreased by the prevailing Fury of the Enraged Conqueror. He often lays the City in Ashes: The miserable People that have the happiness of escaping with their Lives after the Sorrow of beholding their Substance possessed by the Enemy, must endure the Reproach and Affliction of being themselves led Captive. One would think it should lance the Hearts, and tap the Eyes of the Savage Conquerors themselves to review the Tragedy that was written by their own Swords. To see *some* Slain with Swords, *some* crushed under Horses, *some* Burnt in their own Houses, *some* almost pined and fainting thro' Hunger, *some* half Dead of their Wounds, and gasping and groaning out their Souls; Heaps upon heaps; The Dead Bodies of Husbands and Wives, Parents and Children embracing each other, in turning over the Rubbish of Demolished Cities, to behold it moistened with Blood, mixt with Limbs and mangled Carcasses; Men and Women, Rich and Poor together; *Nobles* Slain, and in their own Cloaths covered with Rubbish for a Monument.

These are the *Calamities* to be expected where God sends War: It turns pleasant Lands into horrid *Aceldama's*, and *Fields of Blood*, covering them with Dead Bodies, like Dung that is spread over the Face of the Ground.

And indeed, tho' the *Instruments* of this Havock and Desolation, be the Wickedest and most Cruel of Men; yet the Lord (who is the Just and the Good) is the Sovereign *Author*, who sends 'em as a Punishment upon great and incorrigible Sinners. Is there any Evil in the City (making it a Desolation and Place of Dragons) which the Lord hath not done? certainly none! Therefore *Jer. IV 6. And I. 15. 16. And IX. 11.* He foretells, and threatens for their Sin, *To bring evil from the North. To call all the Kingdoms of the North against Jerusalem, and the Cities of Judah to make them a Desolation and Dens of Dragons.* And to shew that the Lord, tho' by *unrighteous Instruments*, Righteously inflicts these Judgments, in this, and the foregoing Chapters, he gives us a Catalogue of their Sins: As also *Chap. V. v. 9, 29. And IX. 9.* *Because thou hast been rebellious against the Lord, &c. Thy ways and thy doings have procured this unto thee, &c. Shall not I visit, says God, for these things? Shall not my Soul be avenged on such a Nation as this?*

If this Voice of the Lord here relating to the peoples Punishment for their Sins, seems to contradict the Voice of the Church, *Psal. XLIV. 17, 18, 19, 20.* *All this is come upon us, yet have we not forgotten thee, neither have we dealt falsely in thy Covenant, &c.* We must

must understand, 1. The Church there speaks not of Her Innocence in regard of God, but of her *Oppressing Enemies*, who Destroyed Her not for *Her Sins against God*, but for her *Serving God*, and because She would not forsake the *true Religion* for abominable Idolatries, as appears from v. 22. 2. The Church don't speak of Her Innocency *before the War*, but of her Patience, and Constancy *under the Persecution*, in which way it was Her Duty *to seek*, and She did *expect* Deliverance from God. And the Church here seems to have respect unto the Barbarous Persecution under *Antiochus Epiphanes*.

In the portraiture of the *unjust violences* of War, we may read the *just treatment* of God's Anger against an incorrigible People for their Sins. If they will not hear his Voice by the Prophets, he will call the *Insensible* Creatures to witness against 'em, as Jer. VI. 19. *Hear, O Earth, behold I will bring evil upon this people, even the fruit of their own Thoughts, because they have not hearkned unto my Words, but have rejected my Law.*

Wherefore when a Land is threatned with War, as *ours* is at present, we should esteem it to be threatned with a very great and fearful Calamity, not to be derided and slighted, but trembled at; for War brings not only Troops of *Soldiers* with it, but of *Evils* too. God commanded Ezek. Chap. IV. to describe upon a Tile, the dreadful Seige and entire Desolation of *Jerusalem*, to awaken the People out of their wretched security: To rouse up our selves, therefore let us review the little Map of War that

hath been presented to us, and listen to the Voice of God that Thunders not from *Heaven* only, but from *Earth* too.

The more to affect us, let us turn our Ears a while from the Musick of pleasant Fields, and Flourishing Cities, to the *doleful Accents* of War; as they sound from *Jer. VII. 31. I'll cause to cease the Voice of Mirth and Gladness, the Voice of the Bridegroom and of the Bride, for the Land shall be desolate.* Let us also set before our Eyes our pleasant Habitations turn'd into Dens of Dragons, and Nests of Vermin. Where we use to Repose our selves on Beds of Down by Night, and spend the Day in *Discharging the Duties*, and *enjoying the Comforts* of Lawful and Profitable Callings, behold Frogs and Toads Croaking and Skipping forth upon us. The Ravage of War may soon produce this dismal Scene: Therefore let us rather wisely apprehend and seriously consider the dangers of War, than like vain Persons, or Muck-worms spend our Time in foolish *wanton Dresses*, or disquiet our Hearts with *carking Cares*, and tremble for fear of God's Judgments: As the Prophet advised that great King, *Break off our Sins by Righteousness, and our Iniquities by shewing mercy to the Poor.* Whilst War is call'd for by inconsiderate Fools, and such as make a Trade en't; let us pray for *Peace*, and the preservation of the Kingdom, Saying with the Church, *Psal. CXLIV. 11, 12, 13, 14. Rise me, and deliver me from the hand of strange Children, whose Mouth speaketh vanity, and their right hand is a right hand of falsehood.*

hood. That our Sons may be as Plants grown up in their Youth: That our Daughters may be as Corner Stones, polished after the similitude of a Palace: That our garners may be full, affording all manner of Store: That our Sheep may bring forth thousands, and ten thousands in our streets: That our Oxen may be strong to labour; that there be no breaking in, nor going out; that there be no complaining in our streets. Happy is that People that is in such a case.

Where the Lord threatens War against a People, we may conclude they have grievously offended him. As when a Righteous Prince passeth Sentence upon any Family in his Land, that it's Woods be cut up, Houses Demolished, Castles levell'd with the Ground, Great and Small put to Death, their Bodies exposed to the Wild Beasts of the Field and Fowls of the Air; we may certainly infer from thence, that Family hath greatly offended: So much more we may conclude, that a Nation is guilty of hainous Sins, and very high Provocations, when the most Righteous King of the whole World passeth on it, a Sentence of War which brings such Evils along with it.

Therefore when we are not only insulted by the Bravadoes of the Enemy, but the Word and Providence of God frown upon, and threaten us, let us acknowledge our Guilt, and deeply humble our selves before the Almighty; not only with a Natural Grief, mourn for fear of the Evils that threaten us, but with a Godly Sorrow bewail the Sins and Rebellions whereby we have provoked the most High. Let us not cry out, Oh! the Evils that are coming, but
Oh!

Oh! the *Sins* that are the cause of 'em, and have provoked so good a God to threaten and send them. This we shall do if we are wise, or will be taught by the allwise God, *Jer. IX. 12. Who is the wise Man that may understand this, and who is he to whom the Mouth of the Lord hath spoken, that he may declare it, for what the Land perisheth, and is burnt up like a Wilderness, that none passeth through?* The Lord is brought in Answering, *v. 13. Because they have forsaken my Law, which I set before them, and have not obeyed my Voice, neither walked therein; v. 14. But have walked after the imagination of their own heart, and after Baalim, which their Fathers taught them.*

Neither ought we to think our selves excused from this acknowledgement and humble Confession of our Sins, because we are honoured with the *Profession of the Word*; for so the *Jews* enjoyed the *Law*, when this dreadful Judgment was denounced against them. We must distinguish betwixt the *Profession of the pure word*, and the *pure profession of the Word*. As *they* horribly transgressed the *Law* which God gave them by gross and open Corruptions in Worship and Manners: So *we* no less abuse the Gospel we enjoy, by like Impieties and Transgressions: Neither should we bolster our selves with thoughts of our Enemies, Heresies, and Idolatries; for tho' we are advanced far above them in respect of the Religions professed on both sides; yet the *goodness* of our Religion makes our *abuse* of it the greater; and this consideration should teach us to lay our hands on our

our Mouths, and our Mouths in the Dust, acknowledging our selves Rebels against that God who denounceth War against us. It is an Argument, rather of the greatness of our Transgression against the Lord, that he not only threatens such *heavy Judgments* against us, but useth such unjust and *furious Instruments* to inflict them; as if what seemed *rigorous* in other Cases, were not *sufficient* to punish our Sins.

Now, as the *Miseries* of War have been as it were in a Map set before our Eyes; let us consider what are the *Prognosticks* of that dreadful Judgment, when approaching.

1. The first, and more general, is this, *When former Judgments have not reformed a People, it is to be feared they are forerunners of great Ruin, yea, total Destruction by cruel Enemies.* This we plainly see in the *Sanction of the Covenant* that God made with the *Jews*, which is Recorded *Deut. XXVIII. Levit. XXVI.* Where for incorrigibleness under lesser Judgments, God threatens to punish them *Seven times more*, and if still they remain incorrigible *Seven times more*, and again *Seven times more*; and when nothing else will do, he threatens to send a *SW O R D* to revenge the Quarrel of his Covenant. A *War* that shall bring all other Judgments along with it, and such a *Desolation* at which their *Mortal Enemies themselves* shall be astonished.

This, also, is what Reason it self teacheth us, considering the Righteousness of God, that he will not always suffer his Goodness to be abused, and his

his Grace turn'd into wantonness. 'Tis the Goodness, Gentleness, and Clemency of God, not to destroy a Nation at once, but by his Word, his Rod, and lesser Judgments, to Instruct, Correct, and Warn them to flee from greater. But when they despise this Goodness of God, that should lead them to Repentance, and go on after the hardness of their impenitent Hearts, they presumptuously treasure up to themselves Wrath against the Day of Wrath and Revelation of a more Righteous Judgment: When *milder Remedies* are not sufficient to Cure the Malady, *Causticks* and *Incisions* must be used: When the *Plough* can't Purge the Ground, the Thistles and Thorns must be stub'd up and *Burnt with Fire*. The *Gibbet*, *Sword*, and *Rack* must be imployed, when *Bonds* and *Stripes* do not reclaim the Malefactor: When People profit not by *lesser Judgments*, 'tis easy to presage that *greater* are at hand. *Abused patience turns into fury*. Lev. XXVI. 27, 28. *If ye will not for all this hearken unto me, saith the Lord, but will walk contrary unto me; then will I also walk contrary to you in fury*. And then denounces against them all the extremities and hardships of a desolating War, as he doth in our Text.

According to God's threatning in the Sanction of the Law, we find he dealt with the *Jewish Church*, in the whole course of his providential Dispensations towards them. He hath used the same Method also with the *Christian Church*. The *Greek Churches*, at this Day, not receiving Instruction from those *Earthquakes*, and other *lesser Judgments* that God sent amongst

amongst 'em, but corrupting the Faith, and growing secure in their impenitency, have been Invaded, Conquered, and Groan under the Barbarous Yoke of a *Mahometan Tyrant*. And, alas! we have seen the like in many Reformed Churches, for contradicting the Blessed Light of the Reformation, and not taking warning by gentler Corrections, crouds of Judgments have invaded them, and they are trampled under foot by *Antichristian Oppressors*.

Now to bring this Rule home to our selves, and judge of our own Case thereby ; have not *We* reason to fear some heavy Judgment? The Plague and other severe Corrections that are past, ought not to be forgotten by us, especially considering how little we have been Reformed by them. *Differences* and *Dissentions* amongst Protestants still continue, and are a very uncomfortable Exercise. Instead of inward Reformation of *Heart*, even outward Amendment in *Garb* and *Gesture* is still to be

Since then the Nation hath been tormented with several Civil Wars, a wasting Plague, a devouring Fire, besides several bloody and expensive Wars with foreign Enemies.

desired amongst persons of a better Character. What then shall we say to the *Errors* and *Heresies* that are Rampant in the Land? The *Drunkenness*, *Swearing*, *Whordomes*, and *Prophanes* that every where abound? Let us not flatter our selves with respect to this and other Protestant Nations (which tho' yet preserved, seem to be in the same Guilt with our selves). Our former Judgments ought to be esteemed not only as *Rods*, whose smart we have felt, but also *Comets* which portend far heavier Stroaks are coming on us, unless

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we reform our selves, and make our peace with God.

But alas ! What stupid Security, refusing to receive Correction, are we guilty of? The very Sins for which God threatned the *Jews* by this Prophet, *Jer. V. 21.* and *II. 30.* and *VIII. 6, 7.* Is there not Injustice and Fraud in dealing amongst us? Of which the Lord complains in them. *Jer. V. 26. They laid snares for each other.* Doth not Lying and Slandering abound amongst us, as they did amongst them? *Jer. VI. 2, 8. They walked in Slanders;* and *IX. 3. They bent their Tongues like their Bows for Lyes.* Is Hypocrisie less amongst us than amongst them? *Jer. IX. 4, 5.* When the Prophet bids 'em, *To take heed every one of his Neighbour, not to trust a Brother, they would utterly supplant each other.* *Ver. 8. They spake peaceably with their Mouths, but in their Hearts they lay wait.* *Jer. IX. 23. They confided in their Wisdom, Strength, and Riches, rather than trusted in God.* Is there not too much of this ungodly vain Confidence amongst us? Doth not the height of Impiety amongst us, equal that which was in them? Of whom the Prophet says, *Jer. VI. 15. and VIII. 12. Were they ashamed when they committed abominations? They were not ashamed neither could they blush.* Are not we as ready to justify our selves as they? *Jer. II. 35. Thou sayest because I am innocent, surely his Wrath shall turn away from me.* And may not we fear God should say to us as he did to them? *Lo I will plead with thee, because thou sayst I have not sinned.*

'Twas a great Sin, indeed, that provoked God to denounce War, when the *greatest* as well as the *mean-*

est were Corrupt. Jer. V. 31. *The Prophets prophesied Lies, the Priests bare rule by their means, and the People lov'd to have it so.* Again, Jer. VI. 13, 14. and VIII. 8, 9, 10, 11, 12. *From the least to the greatest, every one gave himself up to dishonest Gain: As well the Prophets as the Priests, all dealt falsely, healing the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, saying peace, peace, and behold there was no peace.* He that hath an Ear to hear, let him hear.

It becomes us to take notice of the Sins we are guilty of, and withal consider the Judgments deserved by them, and to be expected for them, without a speedy and serious Repentance. Then we sanctifie such a Fast as the Prophet did, *Dan. IX.* who confessed, and bewailed, his own Sins, and the Sins of others, both small and great.

Be perswaded seriously to read over *Amos IV.* The Lord there, mentioning several Judgments which he had inflicted, after every one of them says, *Yet have ye not returned unto me.* And behold what follows, *v. 12, 13. Therefore thus will I do unto thee, O Israel, and because I will do this unto thee, prepare to meet thy God, O Israel. For lo, he that formeth the Mountains, and created the Wind, and declareth unto Man what is his thought; that maketh the morning darkness, and treadeth upon the high places of the Earth, the Lord, the God of Hosts is his Name.*

But because Persons love to flatter themselves with hopes of Peace, Let us consider what may be objected against the former Doctrine.

Obj. 1. The Jews promised themselves much, because they were the People of God; the Babylonians Worshipp'd Idols, but they had God's Temple amongst them.

Sol. To this God Answers. Jer. VII. 4. Trust ye not in lying words, saying, The Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord are these; and ver. 9, 10, 11. Will ye Steal, and Murder, and commit Adultery, and Swear falsely, and burn Incense unto Baal, and walk after other Gods whom ye know not, and come and stand before me in this House, which is called by my Name, and say we are delivered to do all these Abominations? Is this House, which is called by my Name, become a Den of Robbers in your Eyes? Behold I have seen it saith the Lord. Ver. 12. He sends them to see what he had done to his place that was in Shilo. And v. 14. threatens to do the like to Jerusalem.

Obj. 2. God be thanked we have many good Men amongst us; if God promised to spare Sodom for the sake of Ten Righteous Persons if they could have been found there, we hope that for a greater Number he will spare us.

Sol. It is not a common Rule with God, that for the sake of some Righteous Persons, he will always spare a wicked Nation; for Jer. XV. 1. He declares that tho' Moses and Samuel stood before him, his mind could not be towards that people. And Ezek. XIV. 14. Tho' Noah, Daniel, and Job were in it, they should deliver but their own Souls. Likewise in Israel (when under the threatening and infliction of the Babylonish Captivity) there were many excellent Persons, as Jeremy, Baruc, Ezekiel, Daniel and his three Companions. Jer. XXVI. 26.

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The *Princes* and all the *People* took *Jeremiab's* part against the *Priests* that would have put him to Death. Godly *Ebedmelech* had thirty that assisted him in drawing *Jeremy* up out of the Dungeon; and yet notwithstanding, for the Incorrigibleness of the Multitude, the Land was made Desolate, and a Den of Dragons.

Obj. 3. Some will say, *God hath often delivered his Church, even in all Countries, and especially in this, as in the Year 1605, and 1588.*

Sol. It is true indeed; and would to God we did remember such Mercies with more humble Gratitude, and less vain Confidence. We know also, that God hath oftentimes delivered *Isreal* as from the Invasion of *Senacherib*: And *Jer. XXXVII. 5.* The Siege of *Jerusalem* by *Nebuchadnezzar* was once rais'd, and that not long before God sent him against it a second time, and deliver'd it into his hands. Expectation of future Deliverance from reflection upon past Mercies, is a vain Confidence, where it is not accompany'd with Obedience. Where persons abuse former Deliverances by ingratitude and presumption in Sin, they must not expect that God should always multiply Deliverances, but rather whet his Sword for sharper Judgments, even total Ruin and Destruction.

Let none then in word or thought alledge any thing from the *World* or the *Church* against the apparent Threatnings of God. Nothing is to be opposed to 'em but Repentance; thereby Destruction will be swallowed up in Victory. *Jer. VII. 3. Amend your ways*
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and your doings, saith the Lord, and I will cause you to dwell in this place.

2. A second judiciary Rule is this. *When a People will not bear the Voice of God by his Prophets, they are like to hear ill News from the Mouths of deadly Enemies :* The Jews would not hearken to the Word of the Lord, and Behold the noise of a Brute to make the Land Desolate, and a Den of Dragons. And to the same purpose saith God by the Prophet *Isaiah, Isa. XXVIII. 11.* (which is also noted by St. Paul, *1 Cor. 14. 21.*) *With stammering Lips and another Tongue will I speak to this People.* And, indeed, it is but just with God not to suffer his Voice, which is so sweet, always to be despised. He will not endure that his Law should always be slighted, and much less his Gospel. When a King finds Rebels deaf to the Monitors of Peace, he sends Heralds and Soldiers that shall make them *hear* and *feel* too. *2 Chron. ch. ult. v. 15.* God Summon'd them to Repentance by his Messengers, because he had compassion on his People. *Ver. 16. They mocked God's Messengers, despised his Word, and abused his Prophets, until the wrath of the Lord arose upon his People, that there was no remedy.* Their young Men were slain by the Sword in the Sanctuary : No pity was shewn to any Age or Sex ; the Temple was burnt, with the Palaces of the Kings and Princes ; the holy Vessels were carry'd away to *Babylon* : All that escaped the Sword were made Captives by *Nebuchadnezzar*, and continued Slaves to himself and his Sons until the Kingdom of the *Persians*.

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The Lord spake thus not only *once* unto the *Jews*, but *twice* also; for after the *Babylonish* Captivity he sent them Prophets, *John Baptist*, *Christ* his own Son, and the *Apostles*; by these Messengers he invited them to the Marriage-Supper of his Son, *Matth. 22*. But some Despised, and others Persecuted, for which the King was wroth, sent forth his Armies, and Slew those Murderers. By the *Romans* he executed a dreadful Vengeance upon the *Jews* for their *Contempt of*, and *Violence against* the Gospel.

So likewise many Christians in the East and West stopp'd the Ears of their Hearts, if not their Bodies, against the Voice of the Lord, for which they have heard the barking Tongues, and felt the sharp Teeth of *Turks*, and *Romans*. And to apply this Rule to our selves. Is it not to be feared, that We likewise shall hear the Voice of Dreadful Enemies, considering the Carelessness, the Security, the obstinate Resistance in the *most*, the Slowness and Heaviness of the *Best* in Hearing the Voice of the Lord, where his Word is Preached in purity and simplicity? Is there not already a Brute in the Land? A great Commotion amongst us, as if all the Families of the North were coming to Visit us? There is a Combination on Foot. Whole Countries Beyond-Sea are moved. Many Churches are Desolated: As with reference to the *Jews*, the Saying was, *Evil comes out of the North*; so we may say, From *Rome* proceeds all Evil against Church and State, against the Faithful in Christ. I say, might they have their Will in all *Protestant* Places, they would leave no Inhabitants, but Beasts of prey,

prey, *Owls*, and *Dragons*, *Monkes*, *Priests*, and *Persecutors*.

Let us not then flatter our selves, or turn a deaf Ear to the Voice of God, lest being unprofitable under gentle Teachers, he turn us over to rougher Masters. If we refuse when God displays the *white Flag of Mercy*, what must we expect next to behold, but the *Bloody Flag of Defiance*? If, like the deaf Adder, we stop our Ears against the charming Voice of the Gospel, how just is it with God to break our Heads by the heavy Club of the fierce Enemy? As when the Voice cannot awake the Person sleeping, the Hand is used to thrust and pull him; so when we snort so securely in our Sins that the Voice of the Word cannot rouse us, what must we expect, but the rough Hand of the Enemy, to vex and torments us out of the fatal Lethargy. Awake, awake then to the Voice of the Lord, as you have it, *Jer. VI. 8. Be thou instructed, O Jerusalem, lest my Soul depart from thee, lest I make thee desolate, a Land not inhabited.*

The Noise of the *Brutt* sounds in our Ears. There are great appearances of, and preparations for War. What should we do then? Let us follow the Advice of the Prophet in the latter part of the Text, *O Lord, I know that the way of Man is not in himself; it is not in Man that walketh to direct his steps. O Lord, correct me, but with judgment, not in thine anger, lest thou bring me to nothing. Pour out thy fury upon the Heathen that know thee not, and upon the Families that call not upon thy Name: For they have eaten up Jacob, and devoured him; and consumed him, and have made his habitation desolate.*
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These Words are a *Directory*, how to carry our selves in such an Accident; I shall consider them in connection with the former verse, and then take notice of the particular Scope and Aim of each verse apart; for thus we shall the better draw forth the Instructions, wherewith they present us, how to act and think when God threatens, or inflicts the Judgment of War.

The general *Direction* is, That in such Cases we must have recourse to the Lord, with acknowledgement and Supplications, as appears by the Connection of these verses with the former; for v. 23. he says, *O Lord, I know the way of Man is not in himself, &c.* And then v. 24, 25. proceeds to Prayer, *O Lord, correct me not, &c.* And here he may be looked upon as the Mouth of the whole Church, or we may esteem it as an Act of the Church Praying by him; foreseeing War coming upon the Church, he flies the faster to God. This we find to have been the usual Practice of the faithful Prophets and Priests. As *Moses, Aaron, Samuel*, and this *Jeremy*, when he could not prevail by Preaching to them, he is most Earnest, and Incessant in Praying for them, till God forbids him to Pray any longer, and declares, that because of their obstinacy, he would not hear his Prayer for them.

Let the Lord's faithful Servants then by the Analogy of the Holy Scriptures, when they foresee the Miseries and Calamities of War approaching, not only gravely admonish the People, but put up their fervent Prayers for them; as they are *Gods Mouth*

to the People, for they are the People's Mouth to God. Therefore as the Prophet exhorts, *Joel III. 17.* Let them that serve at the Altar, say, O Lord, spare thy people; do not make them the Song of the Nations; Why should they say amongst the Heathens now where is their God? Above all Men, such should beware of drawing down God's Judgments upon the People, as the corrupt Priests and Prophets in *Jeremiah's* time did. As *Hophni* and *Phineas* by their wicked Lives, made the Lord's Worship to be abhorred by the Nations, and pull'd down his Judgments upon the people and themselves. Oh! that those whom the Lord hath set as Watchmen upon the Walls of *Zion*, would watch over themselves, and for the Church; not only give warning of the Lord's Wrath coming on the Church, but cry mightily for his Mercy towards it, as *Habakkuk* did, *Chap. III. 2.* O Lord, I heard thy Voice, and was afraid. O Lord, revive thy work in the midst of the years, in the midst of the years make known; in wrath remember mercy.

Tho' this be the special Duty of Ministers, yet 'tis not to be neglected by private Christians. When the Watchman sounds an Alarm, should not every one cry to Arms? The Arms I mean, are Prayers and Tears; 'tis twice mentioned by *Solomon*, *Prov. XXII. 3.* And *XXVII. 12.* The prudent foreseeth the evil, and hideth himself, but the fool passeth on and is punished. Where and how should Christians hide themselves, but by Humiliation, Repentance, Faith, and fervent Prayer, flying to the Name of the Lord, which is a strong Tower?

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When the Lord's People went out to Battel, *Numb. X. 8, 9.* the Priests were commanded to blow with Trumpets, which contained a warning to the People, and a cry to God, *2 Chron. XIII. 14, 15.* When *Ahijah* was Assaulted before and behind with numerous Enemies, the Priests did not only blow their Trumpets, but the People lifted up their Cries, and the Lord smote and discomfited their Enemies. And Chap. *XIV. 9, 10, 11, 12.* When *Zerah* the *Ethiopian* with a thousand thousand Men, and three hundred Chariots came against *Judah*, the Priests did not only blow the Trumpets, but *Asa* and his People cried unto the Lord, and the Lord smote the *Ethiopians* before them. As great a Mercy was bestowed upon *Jehoshaphat*, Chap. *XVIII. 31.* when ready to be Slain by the *Syrians*. And Chap. *XX.* when Assaulted by the *Moabites, Ammonites, &c.* upon his crying to the Lord he obtains *Deliverance* from the former, and a glorious *Victory* over the latter. So likewise *1 Chron. V. 20.* The Children of *Reuben, Gad*, and half Tribe of *Manasseh*, in great Distress, crying to the Lord, he was intreated by them, and subdued their Enemies for them, and enriched them with their Spoils. To add one Instance more,

In the utmost Distress, when *Senacherib* by *Rabshakah* insulted *Hezekiah*, and *Blasphemed God*, *Isa. Chap. XXXVI. and XXXVII.* we find what a glorious *Victory* that holy King by deep *Humiliation*, and fervent *Prayer* obtained against his proud and potent *Enemy*.

By these Examples we are taught and encouraged, when under the Commination of War, to apply our selves to Prayer, wherein we must be fervent and constant. When *Moses* held up his hands, *Israel* prevailed; when he let them down, *Amalek* prevailed. Fasting is a proper means to humble our Bodies, and promote our fervency in Prayer. Therefore our Prophet, *Jer. IV. 6, 7. And VI. 27.* upon this threatning from the North, calls them to put on *Sackcloth, lie in Ashes, and mourn as for an only Son.* Such Mortifications, according to the Dispensation they were under, became an Holy Fast. Our Saviour saith, *Mat. XVII. 21.* That some sort of Devils go not out but by Fasting and Prayer. The same may be said of some sort of *Enemies*, nothing else will scatter them. Let us then Fast and Pray to God, that he would not suffer our Enemies to Invade, and make our Land a Den of Dragons, nor make those Protestant Churches (which are yet out of his power) a Desolation, as he hath done too many already.

Read over with Attention *Psal. CII.* which is intitled *A Prayer of the Afflicted when he is overwhelmed, and poureth out his complaint before the Lord.* It becomes all serious Christians at this Day, thus to pour out their Prayers before the Lord, both themselves and the Church of God.

The old Ceremonies of renting Garments, using Sackcloth and Ashes do not concern us; but with our Father *Abraham* (if we are his Spiritual Children) let us remember that we are Dust and Ashes, unworthy of Mercies. Let us mortifie our Bodies with Fasting, rent our Hearts for Sin, which deserves

erves all, and worse than the Enemies threaten us; and for Sackcloth, cover our selves with Shame, and with Tears bewail our Transgressions.

The foresight of *Hazaels* cruelty against *Israel*, made *Elisba* weep, 2 *Kings* VIII. 12. The news of his *Brethrens* Affliction in *Judea*, made *Nehemiah* Mourn, and Fast, and Pray, *Nehem.* I. 3, 4. God spared wicked *Ahab*, because upon the threatening of Judgment he humbled himself, tho' not sincerely.

Review the *Map of War* that hath been set before you, and think whether you could abstain from bitter Mourning, should those Miseries and Calamities come upon you? How much more would it be for the Glory of God, the Spiritual Advantage of our own Souls, sincerely and deeply to bewail those Sins for which God threatens to overwhelm us with a Deluge of Water; then we might hope to see a change upon the Face of Providence, and behold the blackness of that Cloud which hangs over our Heads, turned into the Meridian Brightness of safety and prosperity, and then we shall find cause to bless God for our danger.

Let us have our recourse to the Lord, and him only, not like our Enemies, who, as if their God were not sufficient to save them, by abominable Idolatry, give his Glory to the Creatures, to Angels and Saints, and call in *He's* and *She's* to help him.

Let us in publick Assemblies, endeavour with one Heart and Voice to lift up our Prayer to God; as in the *Text* the Prophet represents the Church, where
all.

all the People by him, as if they were but one Man, cry out, *O Lord, correct me not, &c.*

Yet in our Families and Closets, every one particularly should labour in this Work; and if any complain of inability for Prayer, let such read over the Prayers, made in times of War, and Danger from cruel Enemies, Recorded in Scripture, as in the Psalms of *David*, and those of other Godly Kings and Prophets, as particularly that of *Asaph*, 2 Chron. XIV. 11. And *Jehoshaphat's* Prayer, 2 Chron. XX. The Text it self is a *Directory* for Prayer on such occasions. The three last verses contain three Heads of Instruction.

1. Head, v. 23. *O Lord, I know the way of Man is not in himself; it is not in Man that walketh to direct his way.* These Words contain a general Acknowledgment of humane Weakness in all Actions; But I shall not insist on them against the pretended Forces of free-Will; nor yet, as the *Jews* do, apply them to the Enemy, as if their meaning was, That the *Babylonians* did not, could not invade their Country without the Permission and Commission of God, tho' that be a great Truth; but consider them with respect to the Matter in hand; and therefore it is as if the Church had said, *O Lord, since it is thy pleasure to send such a Judgment upon us for our sins, we acknowledge there is nothing in us which can possibly turn it away; all our Counsels and all our Preparations can do nothing against thy just and holy Will.*

Without this acknowledgment we can never be rightly desposed under the threatening; or infliction

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of God's Judgments. The common fault of Men is to place a vain confidence in the means which they use, either Lawful or Unlawful. Thus the Jews were for confiding in their Allies and Confederates or in their Fortresses and strong Cities. With reference to the former, it is said, Jer. II. 18. *What hast thou to do in the way of Egypt, to drink the Waters of Sihor? Or what hast thou to do in the way of Assyria to drink the Waters of the River?* And v. 36. *Why gaddest thou about so much to change thy way? thou also shalt be ashamed of Egypt as thou wast of Assyria.* With respect to the latter, their confidence in their Forts, Jer. VIII. 24. *Why do we sit still? Assemble your selves, let us enter into the defenced Cities, and let us be silent there, for the Lord our God hath put us to silence, and given us Water of Gall to drink, because we have sinned against the Lord.* Are not ill advised Christians too Subject to the same vain Confidences when God's Judgments do approach? Their Words and Actions do most evidently witness it; but the Prophet here taught the Jews, and teacheth us to acknowledge, that all Helps are incapable to deliver from the Threatnings and Hand of God.

The meaning hereof is not that we should neglect the use of lawful means; that negligence is a Sin, the contrary a Duty; but when most prudently and diligently we use means, we must not trust in them: For thus saith the Lord, Jer. XVII. 5. *Cursed is the Man that trusteth in Man, and maketh Flesh his arm, and whose Heart departeth from the Lord.* Therefore with a diffidence in all Creatures, we must learn

learn to place our trust in God alone. Upon the threatenning of this War, the Lord says, *Jer. IX. 23, 24. Let not the wise Man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty Man glory in his might, neither let the rich Man glory in his riches; but let him that glorieth, glory in this, That he understandeth and knoweth me to be the Lord, which exercise loving kindness, judgment, and righteousness in the Earth; for in these things I delight, saith the Lord.*

Let us not therefore vainly confide in any Person, or trust in any Creature whatsoever, to skreen us from the just wrath of the Almighty.

Let us not be puffed up in our long enjoyed Peace, and great Prosperity above other people, *Psal. XXX. 5, 6. In his prosperity, David said, I shall not be moved. But how doth he correct himself? Lord, by thy Favour thou hast made my Mountain to stand strong. Thou didst hide thy Face and I was troubled. Neither let the Natural Strength of our Land deceive us: For such vain Confidence how is Edom threatned? Jer. XLIX. 16. Thy terribleness hath deceived thee, and the pride of thine Heart, O thou that dwellest in the clefts of the Rock, that holdest the height of the Hill; tho' thou make thy Nest as high as the Eagle, I will bring thee down from thence, saith the Lord. v. 17. Also Edom shall be a Desolation.*

Nineveh had long Peace and Prosperity, yet is threatened, *Nabum I. 12. Tho' they be quiet, and likewise many thus shall they be cut down, &c. Nineveh was situate in the midst of the Sea, and hard to be come at, yet Nabum III. 8. God threatens it that it should no more escape*

escape then populous No ; that was scituate amongst the Rivers, had the Waters round about it, and whose Rampart wasthe Sea.

Let Creature's help and strength be what it will, Blessings never so many and great, by trusting in them, we provoke God to make them temptations to our Enemies to attack us; and instead of protecting, us say unto us, as Jer. II. 37. *Thou shalt go forth from him, and thine hands upon thine head, for the Lord hath rejected thy vain confidences.* Then let all in general, and every one in particular, say as we are instructed by the Psalmist, Psal. CXV. 9. 10, 11. *O Israel trust thou in the Lord: he is their help and their shield. O house of Aaron, trust in the Lord: he is their help and their shield. Ye that fear the Lord, trust in the Lord: he is their help and their shield.* This acknowledgment we are taught to make in the Text, from a distrust in our own Wisdom and Power, to say, *O Lord, I know that the way of Man is not in himself, neither is it in him that walketh to direct his steps.*

2d. The Second Head of Instruction, is in v. 24. which teacheth us two things. 1. *Submission* to God's Chastizement, *Correct me.* 2. *Deprecation* of the extremity of his Anger, *but with judgment, not in thine anger, lest thou bring me to nothing.*

1. In saying, *Correct me.* The Church doth not shift off God's Fatherly Judgments, but acknowledging that she hath deserved all he sends, and more, submits under his Hand, and kisseth his Rod. In order to this submission we should have, 1. *A true sense of our Sins, and their desert.* 1. *A Childlike Disposition, to bear the Divine Chastisement.* 3. *Patience and Humility under the rod.* F There

There must be a sence of the desert of our Sins ; for we shall never, as we ought, prepare for Afflictions to bear them with Repentance, till we say with the Penitent Thief, Luke XXIII. 31. We receive things worthy of our evil deeds. Tho' our punishment, like his, be full of smart, and ignominy too.

Without submission to Gods Chastizements, we shall rebelliously kick against the pricks of his Judgments. And not like David, when cast out by the Rebellion of his Subjects, which was headed by his unnatural Son, 2 Sam. XV. 25, 26. Say, If I have found favour in the Lord's Sight, he will bring me back again, &c. But if he say, I have no delight in thee, here I am, let him do with me that which seemeth good in his sight. Or like Eli when he heard God's terrible Judgments denounced against his Family, 1 Sam. III. 18. It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good. If these great Examples are beneath us, let us follow the Son of God himself: If with him we Pray, Father, if it be possible, let this Cup pass (that we may do) let us also add, Nevertheless not my Will, but thine be done.

Without Humility and Patience, we shall say with Cain, Gen. IV 13. my punishment is greater than I can bear. Instead of carrying it like silent Aaron when Fire from the Lord Burnt up his two Sons (Levit. X. 3.) Or like David, Psal. XXXIX. 10. I held my peace and opened not my mouth, because thou didst it.

When we carry it thus under God's Judgments, they will be to the Glory of the Lord, thereby rebuking Sin, for our own good, exercising our Faith and Patience, and quickning us to Repentance,
for

for the Edification of our Neighbour, who will be warned thereby to take heed of offending that God, who will not spare his dearest Children. Let us therefore say with the Prophet, *O Lord, Correct me*; but withal beg, that he would not suffer us to be tempted above what we shall be able to bear; and this leads to the second thing contained in v. 24.

2. *The deprecation of the extremity of his Anger, O Lord, Correct me, but with Judgment, or Measure, not in thine Anger, lest I be brought to nothing, q. d.* "I don't run away, or refuse thy Correction, but O my good God and Father, I entreat that it may not be according to the greatness of my Sins, but the littleness of my Ability to bear it; not according to the greatness of thy provoked Justice, but the greatness of thy reconciled and reconciling Mercy through thy Christ, my Saviour, and my Lord, that by, and in the midst of all thy Judgments, I may not be lost, but reformed to thy Glory, and my everlasting Salvation. This is what all in general, and every one in particular, should do in the midst of God's threatned, or felt Judgments.

Sometimes God punisheth according to the greatness of Sin: This utterly destroys, as in the *Reprobate*, that is called *Wrath*; with respect to the *Effect* not *Affection*. Sometimes He inflicts such Judgments as persons are by him enabled to bear. Under these they subsist *Temporally*, or at least are improved *Spiritually*, and their *eternal Salvation* is thereby promoted. In the heaviest Judgments he sends upon the Church, he never suffers it quite to be destroyed, that the wicked may not

Triumph, as having their whole desire upon God's Children; that his people may not be driven to despair, but a Church be still preserved in the World to glorifie him.

Therefore when we deprecate the Extremity of God's Anger,

1. *We must acknowledge that our Sins deserve more than God inflicts or threatens.* Zophar tells Job under his great Afflictions in *Estate, Relations, Body, and Spirit* too, Job XI. 6. *God exacteth less of thee than thine Iniquity deserveth.* For Rom. VI. ult. *The wages of sin is Death, i. e. eternal Death,* because opposed to that eternal Life, which is the Gift of God, by Jesus Christ.

Obj. If it be Objected, Isa. XL. 2. *That the Church received for all her Sins double.*

Sol. 'Tis not to be understood of Her own Afflictions, but the Sufferings of Christ; for 'tis before said, *Her Iniquity was pardoned,* which is only done through Christ.

We must never think that God threatens or strikes us so much as our Sins deserve. Since the Father hath committed all Judgment to the Son; He may as justly say to us, as Solomon's Son *unjustly* said to his Subjects, *My Father chastized you with Rods, but I will chastize you with Scorpions.*

2. *As Rebels that came with Ropes about their Necks, yet cry for Mercy, and the pardon of their Offences:* So in the depth of our Humility we may pray, That God would not Correct us according to his Anger for that would reduce us to nothing. To this end we should always have in our Hearts and Mouths the Prayers.

Prayers of the Godly in their Affliction, *Psal. VI. 2. Lord rebuke me not in thine anger, and do not correct me in thy fury, have mercy upon me. Hab. III. 2. O Lord, in judgment remember mercy.*

3. We ought herein to have our chief respect to the Glory of God, and the Churches Salvation, that there may remain a People on the Earth to praise him. Therefore we should use that Expression for thy Name's sake. And the Psalmist's Argument *Psal. CXV. 17. The dead praise thee not, O Lord, neither they that go down into silence.*

Now, more particularly to practice this Submission with Deprecation, Let us submit our selves to God, as the Apostle exhorts, *James IV. 7.* for not having yielded him active Obedience, let us render him Passive; and not having Obeyed in doing his Will, let us Obey in Suffering according to it. Children and Subjects turn errand Rebels, when having despised the *Commandments* of their Fathers and Princes, they also refuse and fly from their *Chastisements*. Since the Authority of God over us, far transcends that of *Natural Fathers*, or *Civil Princes*, let us, as good Children and loyal Subjects, humbly submit to the Chastizements he is pleased to send for our Sins, earnestly deprecating the fierceness of his Wrath, entreating that he would graciously temper his Corrections with Mercy, and not utterly consume us.

Upon a great provocation, the Lord by *Moses* calls the Children of *Israel*, *Exod. XXXIII. 5 6, 7. &c. A stiff necked People*, and threatens immediately to consume them. Therefore says He, *Put off your Ornaments that*

I may know what to do unto you. The People startled at these amazing Tydings, *Put off their Ornaments and mourn before the Lord.* Here's an Example of *Submission* with *Deprecation*. The Lord mitigates their deserved punishment, and promises his Presence to conduct them. Thus it becomes us to behave ourselves when we have kindled the Wrath of God by our Sins, and the procedures of his Providence cite us to appear before him, to receive Correction.

The heavy Judgments of God, under which so many Churches groan, and the former Corrections which we have felt, and by which we have been so little profited, are sad prognosticks of an approaching Wrath. Let us then cast away our Vanities, and with the Prophet, *Dan. IX. 8, 9.* acknowledge that we have sinned. Our *Kings*, our *Princes*, and all *Ranks* and *Degrees* of *Men*, for which to us belongeth Shame and Confusion of Face; but to our God belongeth Mercy. *O Lord, correct me therefore but with judgment, not in thine anger, lest thou utterly consume me.* And turn your Prayer against the Enemy, which leads us to.

3d. The Third Head of Instruction in the Text, v. 25. *Pour out thy fury upon the Heathen that know thee not, and upon the Families that call not upon thy Name.* These words contain an holy *Imprecation* against the implacable Enemies, and obstinate Persecutors of the Church: They are a Prayer not only against their *Councils* and *Actions*, but their *Persons* too.

Obj. *But doth not this seem contrary to the words of Christ, Mat. V. 44. who commands us to Pray for our Enemies.*

Sol.

Sol. I Answer, No; if we consider and observe, 1. *against what* Enemies. 2. *How.* 3. *For what end.* 4. *In what way;* all which being retained in our Minds, may serve as so many Motives exciting us to this Duty.

1. 'Tis not against *private* and *particular* Enemies (concerning whom that Commaudment of Christ may be understood) but against the *publick* Enemies of God and his Church. *They know not God, they call not upon his Name.* And as they have not, they abhor the true Religion; their great Desire, Design, and Delight is to devour *Jacob*.

2. Consider the *manner* how this Prayer is to be managed. We must not pray against such Enemies in *particular*, but against their *confederated Body*, and *impious Associations*. *Jeremy* directed not his Prayer against *Nebuchadnezzar*, or any other person in *particular*, but against *Atheistical Nations*, and *adverse Families* in *general*; when the Prophets pray'd against particular Persons, they did it by particular *Inspiration*, and as Types of our Lord, pronouncing Sentence of dreadful Judgments against his sworn Enemies. We have no such extraordinary Spirit. And when the Disciples, *Luke IX. 55*, in imitation, as they thought, of *Elias*, were for calling down Fire from Heaven upon the Heads of the *Samaritans*, our Saviour rebuked, and told them, *They knew not what Spirit they were of.* Particular Enemies, how great and violent soever, may be converted and turned into eminent Instruments of God's glory, and the Churches good. *Saul*, from a cruel Persecutor, was turned into a *Paul*, a zealous Preacher of Christ, was not only converted from a *Wolf* into

into a *Sheep*, but became a faithful *Shepherd*. *Nebuchadnezzar* himself, as some Divines both Antient and Modern, conclude from *Dan. IV.* was truly Humbled, Converted and Saved; therefore we must be careful how we pray against particular Persons, at least *absolutely*: But as we pray for all Men in general without prejudicing God's *Justice* against some: So we ought to pray against the wicked in general, without prejudicing his *Mercy* towards any in particular.

3. We are not to pray against the bulk of the Churches Enemies, but for very good Ends, *viz.* the Glory of God, the preservation of the Gospel, the deliverance of the Church, the advancement of true Religion: When for these Ends we pray against the Churches implacable Enemies, we ought not to *Rejoyce* in, but rather *Condole* the Misery of Mankind, rejoycing only in the Glory of God, and the Churches Advancement, which rise out of their Destruction.

4. And to conclude, we ought not to pray against them, with *impatience*, and a *revengful Spirit*, but only from a Principle of holy Love to the Church, and pure Zeal to the Glory of God; for the Faithful never ought to be cruel, but such meek Ones, whom the Lord hath promised to Bless, and make them to inherit the Earth.

Observing these Rules, we may and ought to pray against the numerous and proud Enemies of the Church. We are taught this in the Text, and *Psal. LXXIX. 29.* if God will make us hear their hideous Voice for our Sins, he will not despise our humble Cry, *against* them, and *for* his Mercy.

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Can we behold the Church overwhelmed, and almost Shipwrack'd in a Tempest of War, and not cry out with the Psalmist, *Psal. LXVIII. 30. Rebuke the company of Spearmen, the multitude of the Bulls, with the Calves of the people, till every one submit himself with pieces of silver, scatter thou the people that delight in War?* When the Enemies come to devour like Beasts, like evil Beasts, we should pray against them. When we behold nothing but plundering of Churches, Corrupting all Men and Things; when nothing but the Churches utter Destruction will satisfy them; Can we choose, but like *Paul*, with an holy Zeal cry out, *Gal. IV. 12. I wish they were cut off that trouble you.*

But some Object, our Enemies are *Christians*, and therefore not to be prayed against. I Answer, Such were those, whom *Paul* desired, that they might be cut off; not only *Christians*, but *splendid Doctors*, in appearance, tho' in reality notorious seducers. The *Romanists* assume the Title, not only of the *Christian*, but the *Catholick Church*; and yet they are not only Seduced, but Seducers too, violent Persecutors, and sworn Enemies of true Christianity, and all such as profess it.

They may well receive the Characters of those in the Text, against whom these fulminations are called for from Heaven, for, *I. They know not the Lord, they profess to know him, but in works deny him, being abominable, and to every good work reprobate.* Such of them as wear names of *Priests*, like *Eli's Sons*, *I Sam. II. 12.* They may be called *Wicked, that know not the*
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Lord.

Lord. 2. They call not on the Name of the Lord. They have not, nay hate the pure Worship of God: They oftener invoke Angels and Saints, both He's and She's, than God and Christ. 3. They devour Jacob, the true People, to the utmost of their power, by Calumnies, Censures, Fire and Sword. Therefore we may pray against them in the Words of the Prophet. Pour out thy fury upon the Heathen that know thee not, and upon the Families that call not upon thy Name, for they have eaten up Jacob, and devoured him, and consumed him, and made his habitation desolate.

But some pretended peace-Maker will say, Were it not better to moderate Controversies in Religion, and reconcile our selves to them? I Answer in the words of the faithful, Jer. LI. 9. *We would have healed Babylon, but she would not be healed; forsake her, and let us go every one to his own Country, for her Judgment reacheth unto Heaven, and is lifted up, even unto the Skies. Our seeking an Agreement renders them more Obdurate. Sad Experience teaches that hereby they get the upper-hand of us. So that on this Account the Lord may say to us, as to the Jews of old, Jer. XIII. 21. What wilt thou say when thou art punished? For thou hast taught them to be Captains, and as chief over thee. Shall not sorrows take thee, as a Woman in Travail?*

Let not then this fine pretext of moderation hinder our necessary Prayers against the publick Enemies of God, his Truth and Church.

Let persons of pretended good Affections, part stakes with the World, the Flesh, Satan and Anti-christ; but let

let us be more faithful to true and pure Religion, which, like that God from whom it comes, should be *indivisible*, and say with *Holy Constancy*, what *Rome* said once with *haughty Insolency*, *I yield to none*, not to *Flesh and Blood*, not to *Principalities and Powers*, not to the *World and Anti-christ*; when they combine with utmost *Rage and Fury* against us, let us cry out, unto our God, *Pour out thy fury upon the Heathen, &c.*

And hereunto we should be the more animated by what the holy Scriptures declare concerning *Anti-christ*, particularly *Rev. XVI.* That he will pour out the *Vials* of his *Wrath* upon the *Antichristian Empire*. And *V. 16.* Upon the *Seat of the Beast*. Oh! that the *Zeal of God's House* would eat us up. Oh! that our *Prayers* may be as *Whips and Scorpions* to drive out of the *Temple* these *Pestilential Wretches* that have turned the *Church of God* into a *Den of Thieves*; they rob the *World* of *Peace*, *Men* of their *Substance and Inheritances*, by *Fraud, Oppressions, and unjust Wars* which they procure; they rob their deluded *Votaries* of their *Money and their Souls* too, by their pretended *Pardons and mercenary Indulgencies*; they rob *God and Christ* of their *Glory*, by giving their *Worship* to *Creatures*, and setting up *humane Satisfaction*s. And shall not holy *Indignation* fire our *Souls* against them? O let us cry unto the *Lord*, in the words which his holy *Spirit* dictates, and are more *His* than *Ours*, saying, *Pour out thy fury upon the Heathen, &c.*

Also we may assure our selves, that sooner or later God will pour out his Wrath upon the Enemies of the Church. The Prayer in the Text hath been long since answered upon Old *Babylon*. She hath been her self made a Desolation and a Den of Dragons, notwithstanding her Grandure, Wealth and Power, even over the Church of God it self, according to the prediction of her Fate, *Jer. L. 39, 40.* And hath New *Mystical Babylon* been less? yea rather more Wicked and Cruel against the Church of God: Harken to her Doom as published by an Angel descending from Heaven, and that with a loud Voice for all to hear, *Rev. XVIII. 1, 2.* *It is fallen, it is fallen; Babylon the Great, and is become the habitation of Devils, the hold of every foul Spirit, and the Cage of every unclean and hateful Bird.* And in the following part of that Chapter, we read of the Lamentation and Amazement of her Admirers at her sore Destruction.

Therefore in the midst of Wars and Confusions we may insult over the New, as the Jewish Church did over the Old *Babylon*, *Psal. CXXXVII. 8, 9.* *O Daughter of Babylon, who art to be destroyed, happy shall he be that rewardeth thee as thou hast served us: Happy shall he be that taketh and dasheth thy little ones against the Stones.* *Rev. XIX. 20.* It's said particularly concerning the present Enemies of the Church. *The Beast is taken, and with him the false Prophet that wrought miracles before him, whereby he deceived them that had received the mark of the Beast, and them that worshipped his Image; and these both were cast alive into the lake of fire burning with Brimstone.* He that eateth up the King's Goose

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(as saith the Proverb) shall void the Feathers an Hundred Years after. So the Enemies of the Church that eat up the Lords People as Bread, it shall be Gravel in their Bowels. The Time is coming when God will reckon with them for the Blood of all his Saints together.

In the midst of Wars and Desolations, God will always preserve a Remnant, as in the time of this Desolation by the *Babylonians*, *Baruc*, *Ebedmelech* and others were preserved, *Jeremy* set at liberty, treated honourably by the Enemy: The Church was preserved in *Babylon*; and after its Destruction restored to the Land of Promise to Rebuild the Cities of *Judah*, *Jerusalem*, and the Temple, where some were preserved alive to behold the Foundations of the *Second* Temple; who had been Spectators of the *First*.

Let the Speculation of these wonderful Events Encourage us to expect that God will preserve and deliver his Church in Present and Future, as he hath done in former Streights and Difficulties. If we our selves should be encompassed with Afflictions, and desire to escape, let us carry it with Repentance, Submission to the Will of God, dependance on his Providence, Zeal to his Glory, and constant fervent Prayers for his Church. Let us seriously reflect upon that of the Prophet *Zeph. II. 1. Gather your selves together, yea, gather together, O Nation not desired. Before the decree bring forth; before the day pass, as the Chaff, before the fierce anger of the Lord come upon you, before the day of the Lord's anger come upon you. And whilst the greater part pull down God's Judgments with the*
Cords.

Cords of their Stupidity and obstinate Impenitency; let not the faithful Despair of their own safety, if they will follow the advice given in the next verse. 2. *Seek the Lord; yea, all ye meek of the Earth, seek Righteousness, seek Meekness, it may be ye may be hid in the day of the Lord's anger.*

So then there is a *May be* for our escape in the midst of common Dangers. The Lord can touch the hearts of Enemies, and incline them to treat us more favourably than the corrupter part of the Church, who mock at such as give themselves up to Holiness, and (as the Jews did by *Jeremy*) create to them all the trouble they are able. God can make War and Captivity as means to advancement, as he did by *Daniel*, *Nehemiah*, and *Esther*, &c. Or as to *Ebedmelech*, and *Baruc*, in the loss of all things else, give us our *Lives* for a Prey. And this should suffice us; we should not promise our selves ease and worldly Conveniencies. Let us frequently reflect on what the Prophet says to *Baruc*, Jer. XLV. 4, 5. Thus saith the Lord, *Behold, that which I have built will I break down, and that which I have planted will I pluck up, even this whole Land. And seekest thou great things for thy self? seek them not, for behold I will bring evil upon all Flesh, saith the Lord, but thy life will I give unto thee for a prey in all places whither thou goest.*

The Desolations of *many* and the danger of *more*, not to say *all* the Protestant Churches, is but too manifest; the ordinary proper means of *delivering* the One, or *preserving* the Other doth not appear; however let us not Despair; the Lord often thinks fit to use ways we think not of, but more wonderful, and so more for his own Glory and his Peoples Honour. Let

Let us not then confine the All-wise and Almighty, to the measures which our finite Understandings think best ; that God by warlike Princes and numerous Armies shall do the work ; nay, tho' it be said, *Rev. XVII. The Kings shall hate the Whore, tear her flesh, and burn it with fire*, (whereof we may retain Ideas in our minds) but tho' battles should be lost on the Churches side ; and such means seem annihilated ; yet let our Faith live, and let us consider, that the work is in the Hands of the Lord of Hosts ; and as 'tis said, *Rev. XVIII. 8. Strong is the Lord God who judgeth her.*

Leaving then the work of the Churches Deliverance, and our own Safety to God ; let us be assured, that in the midst of all Calamities and Desolations, the Church shall live, and we shall not be lost ; yea, tho' we lose our Lives (for there is no absolute promise of temporal Safety to particular Saints, its only a *May be ye shall be hid*) yet with Faith, Hope, Patience, Repentance, submitting our selves to God, everlasting Life is sure : Come what will come, it shall be in measure, that we may not be brought to naught.

This is the great Point of Consolation that we should always retain in our Minds, through the whole Course of our troublesome Lives here, and in the Hour of Death.

How then came it to pass, that the Jewish Church, spoken of in my Text, under the Violence, Insults and Desolations of War ; yet according to the Prayer of the Prophet, was not reduced to naught, but preserved in, and delivered out of *Babylon* ? 'Twas

not

not by any power of their own, or their Allies, but God stir'd up the Heart of *Cyrus* King of *Persia*, to proclaim Liberty to them to depart into their own Land; and of *Darius*, to encourage and assist them in building the Temple and City of *Artaxerxes*, to rebuild the ruined Walls of *Jerusalem*; as we read in *2 Chron.* in *Ezra*, and *Nehemiah*.

Behaving our selves as we have been taught, whatever difficulties, or temporal destruction we meet with in this World, we shall not perish Spiritually or Eternally. Nay, as the Apostle says, *1 Cor. XI. 32.* *Our being chastened in the World*, God will make a means of keeping us from being *Condemned with the World*. All these Exercises and trials will not be aggravated according to the desert of our Sins, but tempered by the Mercies of our God and Father, till we pass safely through them all into the Kingdom of his Glory; there the terrible *Noise of the Bruit of War*, shall be changed into Charming *Halleluja's*. The Wrath of God shall be poured out upon Devils and Reprobates, whilst we obtaining perfect Victory over all Enemies, the Flesh, the World, Anti-christ, the Devil, Death, the Grave, shall Reign eternally in Glory, with, and by our Lord Jesus Christ. Unto whom with the Father, and the holy Spirit, be Honour and Glory, from hence forth, and for ever. *Amen.*

FINIS.

